

Contributions

WHAT DOES CHRISTMAS MEAN?

Z. T. LIVINGOOD

It means a day set apart to celebrate the birth of Jesus, a day of festivities, presents, gifts, a day of merrymaking, a day of worship and praise. The word Christmas is taken from the two words, Christ and mass, and would therefore mean worshipping Christ. Christmas virtually resolves itself into the proposition, What is Christianity? This is a stupendous question. The life and teachings of Jesus are so marvelous, mysterious and matchless, that even now, after nineteen hundred years of diligent and scientific study and investigation, they yield constantly, the richest and grandest gems of truth. You cannot think about Jesus' birth without associating with it Jesus the man, and his boundless and divine teachings.

In a sense Christmas is synonymous with Christianity, and "Christianity is summed up in two words, Jesus and his gospel," so says the learned Dr. Harnack of Germany, in his famous lectures in the University of Berlin. He says more, "that the message is vitalized by a person."

This is Dr. Harnack's definition of Christianity: "It is divine sonship, spread out over the whole life, an inner harmony with God's will and with God's kingdom, and a joyful certainty in the possession of eternal goods and in confidence of protection from evil."

Christmas to the true believer means the birthday of our sonship to God. The birthday of the new man, the beginning of a new and holy experience. The beginning of new and rich possessions. The beginning of an illuminated intellect and conscience, and a quickened moral perception. A life embellished with ever grace of the Spirit.

What should this coming Christmas mean to you? It should mean the destruction of (1) Mammon as a master, who demands our service, (2) and the needless and injurious effects of the care and anxieties of this life, (3) and selfishness. Christianity has a destructive power as well as a constructive. It first destroys, mortifies, puts off. We can not build wisely unless we clear away the rubbish. This is of prime importance and necessity. The old must die ere the new can secure a foundation. The new is built upon the ruins of the old. This is a fitting time to kill old and sinful habits and works, and then to make large additions to the Christ-life. Additions in love, in meekness, in purity, in benevolence, in righteousness and self sacrifice. This is a time for Christian worship, for the outward and inward expressions of joy over victories won, expressions of gratitude for heavenly goods and divine protection. This is a time for substantial and real gratitude to God in the form of service, extending the gospel privileges to those who know not Jesus and his salvation. Shall we give rich gifts unto Jesus during this

great day? Shall we give anew and more completely our hearts, minds, strength and souls? Shall we? May it become more real that this life is a continual manifestation of our new birth, and new life, and new hope, and a more blessed realization of the benefits of God's kingdom on earth.

NEW YORK NOTES

J. D. GILLIN

The Raines Law.

There has been considerable discussion of late in the newspapers here about the Raines Law, which is the New York liquor law. The Raines Law allows most saloons to call themselves hotels, which generally are only places of vice. In such hotels a sandwich must be sold with each glass of liquor. In the recent campaign both sides promised a liberal interpretation of the Raines Law as to Sunday closing. The Law requires saloons to be closed on Sunday, but hotels can sell on Sunday. So the Raines Law really was a measure to allow the liquor interests more liberty. But it was a well known fact that Tammany allowed saloons open on Sunday on payment of so much blackmail. The fusion forces promised to allow them open certain hours for they argued that the people demand their beer and it is not right to deprive the poor of it when the rich can have it on Sunday. There was some talk after election of leaving the legislature repeal the Sunday closing law, but certain preachers have raised such a dust that Mayor elect Low declares they will do nothing with the Law, but that he will not enforce it too severely is generally believed. It all shows that in New York public sentiment regarding the saloon has been so debauched that a man can not be elected who comes out squarely against the saloon.

The difference between Iowa public sentiment and New York City public sentiment is world wide. Prohibition was not a failure in Iowa, even if it should be shown that it did nothing else than educate public sentiment. One can observe, however, a steady tendency on the part of the liquor interests of Iowa to gradually "edge in" on the public sentiment of Iowa.

The Mulct Law was a move in that direction. And like every other compromise it has tended to debauch the public sentiment of Iowa. The present agitation against the unfairness of the Mulct Law in its operation against the small towns, is simply one more effort of the saloon forces to break down such a restraint. They want a looser law. They will not rest until they have no restraints. Iowa was to be pitied when she forsook absolute Prohibition.

Death of Prof. Mayo Smith.

Prof. Smith had been identified with Columbia for many years and has helped to make it the great university it is. Prof. Giddings said the other day to us in class that Prof. Smith was generally recognized as the first authority in this country on statistics and had but few peers in the world.

He came to his death by accidentally falling from a third story window in his house. Suddenly he passed to the Beyond. "Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Prof. Frame On Lord's Supper.

A few days ago I visited Prof. Frame's class which is reading Acts. He was lecturing on the second chapter. He made it very plain that in the Apostolic church the Lord's Supper was a full meal in connection with which they observed the communion. Of course, such people who are absolutely true to the facts of history must explain why it is not necessary to observe it today as the church did then.

I have under investigation here as fast as my other work will allow a thorough historical investigation of the ordinances in the Apostolic church. It is possible that some time I may be able to bring out something of value to the whole church.

Deaths at Waterloo.

The news from Waterloo, Ia., the past two weeks has brought to us sad tidings. It is sad to think that we shall see Sister Beal's face there no more. She was one of our devoted members. She was tender-hearted and a splendid neighbor. It will be very lonely for the two left behind. Yet it certainly is a matter for rejoicing that she who was called was ready. Thus the world passes away one by one, and the church on earth is translated to be the church in heaven.

Another piece of sad news was the death of Nora Smith Hillack. How sad for one in the very prime of life to have to lay down life's duties. Yet God's way is always best. Our hearts go out to the family bereft of a daughter and sister. Certainly, they have had their share of the world's sorrow. For the last two years some of the family have been sick almost constantly. Two have been very near death's door to come back to health again. One, sad to think, was called across the River, and he in the very blush of young manhood. The beautiful thing to me in all this is that we heard no note of complaining. They suffered, but they suffered in meek submission to the inevitable. Our hearts go out to these friends in this new grief. God's name is still El Shaddai,—the God who is sufficient.

PULPIT ECHOES.

From a Sermon to Wives

And before I close, let me make a plea for more love in the home, especially between husband and wife. A true marriage is one long honeymoon. If I take my wife on my lap, entwine my arms about her neck and whisper in her ear the pure sweets of youthful lovers, bringing to memory the glad joys of other days, some one says, I'm "silly". Well, beloved, I am "silly," and moreover, I expect to remain "silly" unto the gray, for "silliness" makes my home an earthly paradise, soothing the scratch of the thorn in my struggle for bread.